

If You Agree

by Paris Reidhead

Paris Reidhead's sermon emphasizes the importance of gathering in agreement for God's glory and the transformative call of Christ in the life of believers.

Duration: 40:05

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 16:24, Matthew 18:19-20, John 5:24, Acts 2:42, Acts 9:6, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Body Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being wholly committed to Christ and spending time in prayer and studying the Word of God. He calls on the audience to sacrifice their time and energy to glorify God and to submit to discipline and teaching. The speaker expresses concern about the state of the church and the world, urging believers to seek a climate similar to that of the early church in the book of Acts. He concludes by encouraging the audience to examine their own commitment to Christ and to live solely for His glory.

Transcript

Will you turn, please, to Matthew 18? This will be the portion from which we shall think this morning. While you're turning, may I recommend very heartily that you read carefully the last edition of the Alliance Witness, especially the editorial by Dr. Tozer on maturity, and the sermon by Dr. Simpson. This was a manuscript found some months ago and now is available for you, and I would urge you to read it.

Both of these are in line and in keeping with the ministry of this morning. The same portion was before us last Lord's Day. It was approached, however, from an expository position rather than this morning more of a textual relationship.

I'm reading from verses 19 and 20, just these two verses. And again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree, it's that portion I wish you to see, if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

We've pointed out in the past that our Lord in this book of Matthew is describing in detail the new thing that he is going to do, namely his church. In the Beatitudes he describes the kind of people that shall be in it. In the portion of Scripture we read in Matthew 16, the foundation upon which it shall be built, namely that he is the Christ and thus reigning sovereign.

And in the latter part of that portion where he said, if any man come after me, let him take up his cross, it is to be built of people that have an experiential union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. Now in this portion you will notice that they are to be an agreed people and they are to be at least two or three. I submit to you first that the location of the church geographically has ceased to be of the importance by the time our Lord speaks.

It is in John the fourth chapter that our Lord speaks to the woman by the well and utters some of the most profound truths that he had to say. You will recall she began the conversation by saying, our fathers say we ought to worship in this mountain, but you Jews say we ought to worship in Jerusalem. Our Lord's reply to that was this, it is not the place where you worship that is of heretofore of great importance, that is whether it's in this mountain or in Jerusalem.

Up until this time it has been, for God has been related to the temple in Jerusalem and not to the mount of idolatry in Samaria. But something is happening, something is taking place. Our Lord is doing a new thing and in this new thing the primary aspect will not be geographic but attitudinal.

The importance is not going to be the place as much as it is the attitude of the people that meet there. The grounds of the church in the Old Testament was the tabernacle in the wilderness and then the temple in Jerusalem. This was the place where people met with God.

But now our Lord is saying that the ground of the meeting of the church or the place where the church meets is not territorial, it's not soil primarily, although obviously they'll have to meet standing somewhere on the soil. But this is not the significant factor any longer. It's not where they meet but how they meet.

Anywhere, any number, two or three, if they are meeting together in my name. And the key here is in my name. We frequently think that all this means is a little appendage to a prayer in Jesus' name or as sort of a little halo that we put over our actions and saying, well, I'm doing it in the name of the Lord or I'm doing it for the sake of the Lord.

But it's far more than that. If two or three are met in the Lord's name, it means, first of all, that they are met by his call. He's called them together.

He's drawn them together. He's brought them together for his own purpose. They've heard his call and they've followed.

You know what is the call of the Lord that draws his people together? I've heard people say, I had a call to Africa or to India. Before going to the mission field, the issue had to be settled. Someone asked me, the mission society said, do you have a call to the mission field? I had to face the matter through and I went before them saying, no, I do not have a call to the mission field.

There is only one call that I recognize in the scripture and that I have had. The call is to follow Christ, to submit to the sovereignty of Christ, to live in obedience to Christ, to walk constantly with one purpose and that is to glorify Christ. But I have not had a call to Africa.

I believe that God is clearly, unmistakably leading me to Africa. But I allow the possibility that in his sovereign purpose he may lead me out of Africa into some other ministry. And my call is to follow Christ, not to a geographical area, not to a place.

Well, I have tried to impress this upon young people in the past, that the call that Christ gives is uniform to everyone to whom it comes. Come, follow me. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.

Take my yoke upon you. The call is to yoke yourself to the sovereign will and purpose of Christ. Now, therefore, the Ecclesia, that is his people, are people that have heard his call.

It's been a call from something to something. It's been a call from self-will, from ruling one's own life, from living to please oneself, to gratify oneself, living under the government and direction of one's own whim and fancy to an entirely new government. No longer I but thy, not my will but thy will be done.

This is the call. It is a call to turn one's back upon one's past and commit oneself to Christ as the governor of the future. And so his people are a called people.

They've been called by him, but they have been called to him. This is a call to Christ, not a call to a church, not a call to a doctrine, not a call to a ceremony or a ritual. It is a call to a person.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Tragically, today there are those that are trusting in the plan of salvation for rest. They've learned the truths concerning the birth, the life, the death, the resurrection of Christ, and they have learned that men who believe in these truths are saved.

And so they have responded to the call of truth, and they have come to truth, and they have received truth. They have intellectually consented to truth, but they've stopped there. It has been a call to truth and not a call to a person.

The plan of salvation does not save. It instructs one to the Savior, but salvation is in a person. He that hath the Son hath life.

It didn't say, he that hath the word, he that hath the Son hath life. It says, he that hath the Son hath life. Years ago, down south, we had an experience of an invitation being given, a man coming forward, a personal worker assigned to talk to him.

He asked his name and his address and what he came for. The man said, to be saved. And so the personal worker opened his Bible to that verse, he that hath the Son hath life.

He said, do you believe that? The man said, I do. And he wrote down save. Now he said, are there any questions that I have before I give this card to the pastor? The man said, yes, there's one question.

You asked me if I believe that verse. I guess it said, he that hath the Son hath life. And I said, I do.

Now there's just one question. What I'd like to know is, how do you get the Son? You see, he'd made the mistake, had the personal worker, of thinking that because the man believed in the verse, he had the Son. But the man who came knew that there had been no change in his heart or in his life.

Salvation is not in the scripture verse. It's not in the doctrine. It's not in the decision.

Salvation is in a person. And so it is a call to the person of Christ. It is a call not only to come to him, but it is a call that results, when properly answered, in his coming to them.

It is Christ in you, not Christ above you, around you, beside you, before you, and behind you. It is Christ in you, the hope of glory. And thus these people that have come to Christ, that are met in his name, are a people that have been called by him and have been called to him.

But they've not only been called by him and to him, but they have been called from something. Paul, writing to the church at Thessalonica, said, You have turned to God from idols to serve the living and the true God. The idols that we recognize in the Old Testament are those of Baal, Ashtoreth, and Moloch.

Baal were the evil spirits, numerous, for in every location there was one, the evil spirits that must be placated in order that one could be prosperous. And rather than trust God for prosperity, they were willing to sacrifice to Baal. Today the counterpart to sacrificing to Baal is to be exercised duplicity in business, lying, cheating, stealing, or otherwise misrepresenting one's product in one's service.

And we find today that there are multitudes of people that are worshipping Baal in the literal twentieth-century sense of living dishonest lives, and some even who carry with them the name of Christ. They are such a person who would practice duplicity in business, would be as were the people in Israel, who feared the Lord but served Baal and Ashtoreth. We see that the worship of Ashtoreth was to satisfy the appetite for sex and sensual indulgence, for it was the worship of the woman.

And thus we find today that all that is in the world is the lust of the eye, things, Baal worship, and the lust of the flesh, Ashtoreth. And then there was the third type of in the Old Testament, that of Moloch. We've pointed this out in detail in the past, so it suffices to just remind you of it now.

Moloch was that great king that was served, even Satan himself, who when properly placated could give to the worshipper position and power and influence and authority. And so the worship of Moloch was expressly for the purpose of being promoted in the eyes of one's fellows. And we would find today that the counterpart is the pride of life, or to use means other than the perfect submission to the will of God, wherein one could acquire ascendancy over his fellows.

And so the call to Christ is a call to turn to God from idols, to renounce the right to secure by any means that which one wants and to live within the will of God in respect to it, to renounce the right to indulgence and to renounce the means of securing prominence and position for oneself. It is to turn from Baal, Ashtoreth, and Moloch, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. So it's a call by someone, a call to someone, and it's a call from something.

And this, to meet in his name, means that one has heard the call by Christ and the call to Christ and the call from the world, has come and fallen at the feet of the Son of God, has been broken in the fall of all of one's plans and purposes and wills and intention and rebellion and anarchy, and has submitted to the sovereignty of Christ. Thus the call is answered by that response to Romans 10.9, the most familiar of verses used in personal work, I presume. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord, what does it mean to confess with the mouth Jesus to be Lord? It means I have heard the call by him, and I have heard the call to him, and I have heard the call from the world.

And now I am coming to say with my lips that I have made a transaction in my heart, and from today on, as long as I live, Jesus Christ shall be the undisputed sovereign of my life. To confess with the mouth Jesus to be Lord is to verbally testify to an inner transaction of sovereignty from self to the Son of God. Thus one can believe in the heart.

Believe in the heart, you notice, means to put it right in the center of one's being. And the result of this heart faith is a saving relationship with Christ. Christ comes in to bring life.

So if two or three are met in my name involves all of this that I have described. These that are met in his name are people that have been broken, people that have been crushed, people that have been slain by the revelation of their sin, and have been healed by the nail-pierced hand of the Son of God. And these are the two or the three that gather.

It is not the person that has sat back and said, oh yes, Jesus is a figure in history, Jesus is prominent in theology, Jesus is center of sociology and of history, and therefore I am believing that he is the Son of God, that he lived and that he died. And an intellectual response without any interior effect, this is not what it means. In our churches I am confident, and across this land of ours, are filled with people that are going to miss salvation, miss heaven by 18 inches, because they have their salvation up here in an intellectual comprehension rather than down here in a spiritual experience and the presence of the Son of God.

Two or three met in my name then, I have had this transpired. Now he has previously said in the verse just before this, if two of you shall agree as touching anything, assume that they have had the same call, they have had this of which we have spoken. Now he said if two of you shall agree as touching this.

May I point out to you that it is not agreeing about something but as touching something. I can't improve on an illustration that I have used in other groups here before. I use it again, with your permission, and no one is going to deny it to me, I am sure, since I am here and you are there, but the matter is this.

Here are four people that are praying for the salvation of a man. He is a father, he is a husband, he is an employer and a prospective church member. The wife is praying for him because he has started to live in such a way that if it continues it can only end up in a separation.

She loves him but she doesn't want her home ruined and so she is saying, oh God, save my husband so that we can continue in a happy home. The little girl is praying, save daddy because I don't want to be in heaven and have daddy in hell. The employer is praying, oh God, save Bill because he would be so much easier to work for if he were just a Christian.

He is so hard and cantankerous now. And the pastor is praying for him saying, my, my, how we do need Bill. What a great influence he could be and his tithe would be a great help in lifting the load.

And so all four of them are agreed about the salvation but they are not agreed as touching it. There is no agreement as touching it. Each has a personal interest, a personal motive in this matter.

There is no agreement as touching it. About the thing, yes, they all want it to happen. As touching it, no agreement whatsoever.

How would they agree as touching it? When the wife can say, regardless of what happens to my home, I want to see him saved for the glory of Christ. When the daughter could say, regardless of hell, I want him to be saved for the glory of God's dear son. When the man can say, regardless of what my employer shall be, I want him saved that Jesus Christ shall receive the reward of his suffering.

And the pastor could say, regardless of what church he should ever go to or what would happen, I want him saved that our wonderful Lord Jesus shall receive that for which is his due. Now when they are agreed as touching it, it is all to the glory of Christ. Only for his praise, only for his honor, only for his glory.

Now they have a common grounds of agreement. All personal interests and personal motives have disappeared in the light of the one supreme compelling reason why they want this person saved. And this, I believe, is one reason why so many times personal prayers fail.

We know it's true. James said it. You pray and you ask and receive not because you ask in this that you might heap it on your own desires.

It is prayer from a personal motive. I am sure the Lord Jesus Christ is interested in the rug in your living room that's prayed and you feel is a contradictory testimony when you bring the unsaved in, and he's concerned about it. But your prayer reason for praying, O Lord, please supply the means of providing a new rug is not so that you won't be embarrassed by it, but that he'll be glorified and there won't be a hindrance when someone should come into your home.

It's got everything, however mundane, menial, or personal it may be, must inevitably be traced right back to this, the one reason and motive for all of our meeting together. This is what our Lord Jesus said in John 17:3, glorify thou me with the glory I had with thee before the world was. This is the secret to answered prayer, the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

And so he says, if two or three of you are met together, I gathered together as touching anything. You've been called by him, called to him, called from the world. You've been broken in his presence, and now you're living only to the glory and the honor and the praise of his name.

Do you begin to see something of the foundation of his church? Now I would point out to you the contrast of what we discover here in the 20th century in America. I have no way of judging whether this has been true in the past, though those who lived in the past have indicated by what they've written that probably it was so then. But I feel that I am speaking now for my generation, which for the past 24 years I've been privileged to serve as a pastor or missionary or in some other capacity.

And I think in some little measure that you will recognize the obvious truth of what I'm saying. Today we have churches of two major groups, the liberal or now the neo-orthodox and the fundamental or the evangelical. This dichotomy or this dividing into two groups certainly is necessary because how can people walk together except they be agreed.

Then we have two other groups that divide the evangelical or fundamental group. We have those that are primarily Calvinist and those that are primarily Arminian in their background, going back to two theologians of history. And so we find that to some degree these divide still a second time.

But I am now no longer interested in the two-fold division, and we probably could press it still further. I am submitting to you this morning a five-fold division, and I would like to have you make some notation because it would probably be of help to you in the future. We have talked now about the church, how he's called these to himself.

We've talked about the union, what it is, this agreeing together, that it is with an eye single to his glory. Now let us take for just a brief moment a look at the church as we find it in the 20th century. I am suggesting to you that you will find in the church five groups.

May I give them and then I will repeat them more slowly so that I do not want anything to divert you from this initial hearing. The first group that I am mentioning is not because of its size or its priority, but simply because of the habit of my thinking, and therefore I give it to you first. The first group are those people that

have met the forgiving Christ.

They discovered their sin through some means or another. They realized they'd been caught, and they didn't know what to do about it. They were told that they were a hell of a hell.

They weren't so sure, but they figured they'd better be on the safe side. So someone said, accept Jesus. Their primary reason for accepting him was to be inured and immunized against hell.

They wanted to have an insurance policy, and so their primary concern in Christ is that he fulfill what they've accepted him for. They were so grateful when they learned that Jesus Christ had died for them, that they wouldn't have to die. Well, put it in more colloquial terms, they were so happy when they learned that Jesus had taken the wrath for them, if I may express it that way.

They were so happy that he died. They have mistaken their pleasure at the fact he suffered for them as being the witness of the Spirit, but their whole concern about Christ is that they should be protected from suffering and from punishment. They've only met the forgiving Christ, and they've never gone beyond that.

When they want to see someone saved, actually what they want is to see someone else come to the place that if they die, they won't go to hell. When they speak of revival, what they mean is to have their hearts feel the same joy that they felt when they first came. There's an upper limit to their interest in the Church and in Christianity, and it all relates to them.

They have met the forgiving Christ. There's a second group. These are the people that have met the Christ.

They were in great need, and they prayed. And when they prayed, God answered prayer. Perhaps someone else prayed and answered prayer.

When they were impressed with the fact that God was tremendously useful and handy to know because they were in a dilemma, they didn't have any answer to it. Prayer brought the answer. They were sick, and God healed them.

Or they were otherwise in trouble, and God brought them out. And so today they are extremely grateful, so grateful that they've joined the Church, submitted to baptism, learned doctrines and tithed. But the whole of their interest in Christianity and religion is that they should be where God can take care of them if they're in trouble or in problem.

They've met the utilitarian Christ. Today we have very popular a cult of the utilitarian Christ. We find that it has nothing to do whatever with this person as the sovereign God.

It's just that faith in Jesus brings answers. And you'll find people whose lives are seemingly just indescribably wicked that have learned faith and then they write articles and say, I'm so glad I wanted to be the queen of Hollywood, and so I asked Jesus, and this utilitarian Christ made me a success. And this, I say, is a cult that it lacks every biblical evidence of being a movement in the stream of Christianity.

The utilitarian Christ, it has varying degrees. The forgiving Christ, the utilitarian Christ. Then there's a third group of people that have met the status-giving Christ.

They were born in such a way that they didn't have the privilege of belonging to the country club, they weren't very accepted in society, they felt they had gregarious impulse and need, and so they were taken

into the Church, they found warmth and welcome, and so because they wanted fellowship, this was what they accepted. They were willing to submit to the doctrine, they were willing to pray, they were willing to be baptized, they were willing to tithe, do anything that was required of them, but when they testified, their testimony is, I am delighted to be a Christian because there's such wonderful people in the Church. I'm so happy because there's such grand people in the Church.

It's such a joy to be with such wonderful people and think we'll be together forever in heaven. They've equated status with the whole purpose of God, their status satisfying their needs for social expression. And then out of this group is another group that become to some degree psychopathic and equate their own status in the group with the glory of God, and anything that pushes them up is to God's glory, and anything that would bypass them or diminish their influence is just the opposite.

And these are the ones of whom we spoke about a year ago when I gave you a quotation from Christianity Today's article of November 1960 entitled, Crucifying the Pastor. This is the group that you find all over America. Just this past week, I've been with a group of 50 pastors down at Summit Grove, and they've talked to me of some of the experiences they've had, where people who have felt that somehow they were bypassed and their status wasn't recognized have used every nefarious, wicked means it was possible to discover in order to bring grief and heartache into, they would rather ruin the Church than to let for one little moment their own personal status be affected.

Well, now this is why this third group, the status-giving Christ, so we have three, forgiving Christ, utilitarian Christ, and the status-giving Christ. Then there is a fourth group. This is the group of people that have met the emotion-satisfying Christ.

Oh, they love to go to church because they enjoy the syncopation and the rhythm and the emotional appeal, and if they can weep or laugh or do both at the same time or in subsequent, then they go away saying, my, what a wonderful meeting. But the whole purpose of Christianity and religion is to satisfy their emotional needs primarily, and so we have people, they have all the same doctrine, they've all been baptized, they're all in the same religious organization, and when they speak of revival, the forgiving, those who know the forgiving Christ say, well, I want to have others come to know forgiveness, and those that have met the utilitarian Christ said, well, I want to see others help, and those that have met the status-giving Christ said, well, I want to see others come into this wonderful fellowship, and those that have met the emotion-satisfying Christ said, well, I want to feel the way I felt back there on July 6th in 1903, back at that camp meeting. Oh, then we'll have revival.

But it's all below the level. Then we have another group called number five. These are the people that have met the holy God and the sovereign Christ.

These are the ones that have seen God in His majesty, have seen God in His sovereignty, have seen God in His holiness, have seen Christ in His glory. These are the ones whose eyes have been opened to God, and in the revelation of God, they've seen their immense unworthiness and their terrifying sinfulness. Obviously, they've known forgiveness, for in that brokenness of heart, because they'd sinned against such a holy God, they cast themselves on the nail-pierced of Christ.

They were forgiven. God has obviously answered prayer, and they have certainly found status as a child of the King, and their hearts have been satisfied with joy and peace. But this which we find in this fifth group are these who've had a revelation of the glory of Christ and are living only for His praise.

They're broken. They've committed themselves to Him. They've submitted to His sovereignty.

The cross has pierced them through, and the one end of their being is that He be glorified. Now, this is His church. This is His church.

The religious organization can include other groups, but His church is here. His church is on this level. He is saying, if any man hate not his father and his mother and his husband and his wife and his brother and his sisters, yea, in his own life also, he can't be my disciple.

The lordship of Christ transcends all human relationships, and His one purpose is the glory of God. And He's heard Christ say, if anyone doesn't take up his cross and come follow me, he can't be my disciple. And he's gladly gone with Christ out to the cross, and there he's brought his ego and his ambition and his vanity and his pride and all the things that once motivated and controlled him to the cross, that he has no plan, no purpose, but the glory of Christ.

This is the one that's heard Christ say, if any man does not forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. He doesn't give a seventh of his time and a tenth of his money. He holds that everything is Christ, all is Christ.

This is His church. This is His church. He said, if any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and come follow me.

Now, I submit to you that for fifty years in America, or longer, pastors as earnest and as sincere as the one who would seek to be sincere standing before you have sought to see revival in America. During these fifty years, the church has become more cold, less powerful, more meaningless in society, until today the world says the church is so weak and powerless that it is utterly irrelevant and obscurantist and has no place in such a generation as ours. This I categorically deny.

I submit to you, dear heart, the reason may lie in the fact that we have been seeking to have a revival of five groups. It can't happen. It hasn't happened, and it isn't happening.

You wait expectantly for groups one, two, three, and four all of a sudden on some Sunday to come broken, and crushed, and hungry, and open, and yielded, and abandoned, and they don't come. I believe that the exigencies of this hour, for I submit to you that the communist threat to America is as every whit is dangerous, as was Sennacherib's army outside of the walls of Jerusalem. I submit to you that we can't longer go on waiting for the recalcitrant, and the indifferent, and the stubborn.

The time has come when those who are of one mind and one heart must begin to meet on the grounds of the Lord's meeting. How will it be? You say, we'll start another group. This has been done.

We have 312 groups in America. The 313th is in the process of formation this morning. I submit to you that the 312 have made not one whit of improvement in the situation.

I see no answer there. What is the answer? Then is it to spend all night speaking in prayer for the four groups to come up to the level of biblical Christianity? No, I see no answer there. I believe that the answer is going to come when we reestablish again that grounds of fellowship as was done under John Wesley in the class meeting.

Our movement, the Christian Missionary Alliance, began that way. We've never repudiated our genius nor abandoned our heritage. It is as much ours today as it was when 78 years ago Dr. Simpson gathered together in parlors and living rooms, W.T. McArthur joined with him, hearts that were committed to Christ, and they spent hours in the Word, hours in prayer, hours in seeking and discussing and thinking together until the glory of God came down in men and women were so marvelously transformed that whole communities were shaken for Christ.

The answer? The answer is going to be under God that a call will go out, and it isn't going out this morning. It's being announced to you today that you can think and pray about it. Are you prepared to give a night of your life above all the other responsibilities you have? If you can't give a night, are you prepared to meet at five in the morning for two hours or more? Are you prepared to expend effort and energy and sacrifice of your time because of the hunger of your heart to glorify God? Will you submit to discipline? Will you submit to teaching? Are you prepared to follow in the way of the Word and of the Lord? Will you stand on the grounds of brokenness? I believe the time will come from this pulpit such an invitation will be given, and whether it be an elder or a deacon or a Sunday school teacher, they'll be asked to come and stand publicly declaring before all that this is the level of their commitment.

Their names will be taken, and they will be expected to meet at the time that they can with a group of those that have made similar commitments to the Lord. Then it will be that those who have chosen not to come have made their own choice. The question has always been, how can you avoid schism? How can you avoid division? If the pastor goes around and says, I'd like to have you with you with you, you meet with me, then he can justly be accused of having created a group within a group.

But when the invitation has been given and people come and stand there and say, I want to go on with Bob. I'm desperately concerned for the fullness of Christ. I'm going to meet him at any cost.

I'm willing to adjust my schedule, adjust my plans. I'm willing to take a night of my life in as many hours as God requires. But I am going to find out how to live wholly for Christ.

Then I believe we have found the grounds. It isn't the grounds of a place. It isn't the grounds of a day.

It's the grounds of unity in submission to the sovereignty of the Son of God. And I believe that when this happens, the glory of God will come down upon hungry hearts. And there will be such revelation of His power, for it was when you had people of one accord, one faith, one mind, seven days that the Spirit of God was poured upon them.

And when you had another group of people bound together by their common needs and common commitment and common passion to see Christ glorified, that the place was shaken. And there are those who stubbornly, through years of entreaty and exaltation, have refused to bow and break before Christ. Then we shall commit them to the Lord.

We have nothing to say except that the grounds of the churches and the grounds of absolute commitment and absolute brokenness and absolute submission in such people have every privilege of meeting together, seeking to God's glory and blessing, and to understand the Word and to move on with Him. I believe that that which will save America is not going to be the great crusade, as important as that has been, the great church, as significant as that is. But it's going to be the cell of groups of people that have been drawn by a commitment to Christ and spread spontaneously and move out.

Beloved, we'd better learn how to worship alone in quiet, because it may come before your many years over that you have to, if you worship at all. And when you remember Macaulay's testimony that England was saved from the abyss into which France fell by the development of the class meeting, perhaps the only way that God can save America is by a return to the class meeting under the direction and control of the church and its elders. But it will be a unit, a place where hearts of similar commitment can be encouraged and encouraged and go on to know the Lord.

So I ask you to take that which you've heard today in the scripture that underlies it and meditate and think and pray upon it and find at what level your commitment has come as of this good morning. Some of you have reached the age when you do not anticipate another ten years. In the normal course of events, your life will have been run.

But some of us will expect under God's help hand to live beyond 1973, and we have children. And we're desperately concerned because the world's on fire. And a sword is hanging over the heart of our land and our country, and the church has been significantly innocuous, meaningless, and powerless in the face of it.

It ought not to be this way, brethren. The time has come when people who love Christ and are wholly abandoned to him must have that opportunity to study the word and how they find out how they can live wholly for Christ and in the fullness of his blessing upon them. The elders of this church have been studying for many months, trying to understand how we can establish a place where the hearts of men and women can find a climate similar to that of Acts, where they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship in breaking of bread into prayers.

This announcement to you this morning, I trust you'll have your prayers, your thought, your attention, and your concern. And you will ask your own heart, am I so committed to Christ that I am willing to spend and be spent, that he may have an opportunity to reveal how glorious he is? Meet God, search your heart, find out where you are, which one of these groups you're in, and then with all haste move into that fifth group where you see a holy God, a sovereign Lord, and you live only to his glory and to his praise. And you're willing to look into his face and say, Lord, what wilt thou hath me to do? Father of our Lord Jesus, look down upon us, see us.

We're here at the crossroads of the world in the center of this great world of iniquity called New York City. We're here, Lord, where there was in yesteryear a bright light that shined here and to the ends of the earth. And our hearts cry out to thee that thou will guide us and instruct us, restrict us and control us, direct us and order us in such a way that thy perfect plan and purpose for us individually and corporately can be realized and the Lord Jesus can receive through our blood ransomed lives all the glory that is his due.

Breathe upon this people. Let a new commitment, a new consecration, a new abandonment come into their hearts and grant, Lord, that we shall see rise up in this land from corner to corner, from border to border, a great surge of hungry-hearted men and women that are willing to meet with each other and with thee that they might be the vehicle for blessing in days like these. So seal to our hearts what we've heard.

Perhaps there's some, Lord, that will want to hear again through the tapes or read what's been spoken this morning. Stir their hearts to that end. For Jesus' sake, amen.

Let us stand for the benediction. Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and honor, dominion and praise now and forever. Amen.

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